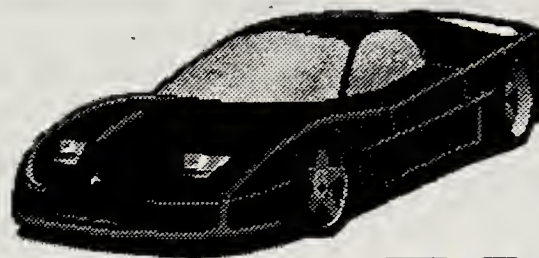


THIS WEEKEND:



35TH ANNUAL LITTLE 500

Dr. Reed to Speak at Commencement

by Maura Giles

Dr. Suellen Reed, Indiana's Director of Public Instruction, will be the guest speaker at SJC's 1999 commencement ceremony. As Indiana's Chief State School Officer, Reed is the director of the Department of Education (DOE), and serves as Chairper-

son of Rush County Schools in Rushville, IN, where she was born.

In 1991, Reed became Superintendent there, and just two years later accepted the IN Superintendent of Public Instruction position.

"In high school I decided I wanted to teach history and government. But it was in college when I worked for a congressman that I decided I liked the government aspect of education best. Through the hands on experience I realized that government is not just what you read, it's what you do." Perhaps it was ideas like this that motivated members of the senior class to nominate Dr. Reed.

The commencement speaker is usually nominated by many groups of people on campus including seniors, faculty, staff, board members, and alumni.

After the nominations, SJC President Skip Shannon collects them and discusses them with his vice presidents. This group checks the backgrounds of several nominees, then Shannon recommends who the speaker will be. The Board of

Trustees confirms his selection, and the speaker is chosen.

Dr. Suellen Reed agreed to be the speaker this year, and was voted by the faculty to receive an honorary degree.



Dr. Suellen Reed will speak at the SJC 1999 commencement ceremony. photo courtesy of the Department of Education

son of the State Board of Education.

After serving in practically every position of the education field, from elementary teacher to principal, Reed became Assistant Superinten-

Graduation Week Schedule

Thursday, May 6, 1999

Degree Signing Party: 6:00pm-8:00pm, President's Home
 (Puma Bus will make 1/2 hour trips from Halleck Center South to the President's home.)
 Core XI Senior Party: 9:00pm-1:30am, Core XI Club Room
 Cash Bar/Hors d'oeuvres

Friday, May 7, 1999

Graduation Portraits: 10:00am-3:00pm, Halleck North Lounge
 Senior Brunch: 11:00am-1:00pm, Halleck Ballroom
 \$5.00 per non-senior student/\$7.00 all others(1)
 Baccalaureate Practice(2): Immediately Following Senior Brunch, Fieldhouse
 Senior Softball Tournament: 2:00pm-4:00pm, IM Field
 Senior Dance: 9:00pm-12:30am, Halleck Ballroom
 Cocktails and Non-Alcoholic Beverages/Hors d'oeuvres, \$8.00 per guest(1)

Saturday, May 8, 1999

Lake Banet Picnic(3): 11:30am-1:00pm, Lake Banet Park
 Baccalaureate Mass: 5:00pm, Fieldhouse
 President's Reception/Dance: 9:00pm-1:00am, Halleck Ballroom
 Cocktails and Non-Alcoholic(4) Beverages/Hors d'oeuvres
 Senior Slide Show 10:00pm

Sunday, May 9, 1999

Community Buffet Brunch: 10:00am-12:00pm, Halleck Cafeteria
 \$5.00 - Students/Faculty/Staff/Children under 12, \$7.00 - All Others
 Commencement Ceremony: 1:00pm, Fieldhouse
 Graduates' Reception: Immediately Following Ceremony, CEC Patio

(1) Cost for graduating seniors and SJC community members is paid by the Commencement Committee; Payment at door for family/friends (do not send money).

(2) Practice for Committee members only.

(3) Cost for graduating seniors and SJC community members is paid by Commencement Committee; Payment at gate (\$4.00/person) for family/friends (do not send money).

(4) Cash Bar

What do you think? Here's what you said!

The Student Union Board Apologizes!

The Student Union Board sincerely apologizes for the inconvenience on March 20, which resulted from the cancellation of *Urban Legends*. We have identified this situation and we have learned from our mistake. We will do our best to ensure that this will not happen again.

The SUB committee would like to invite all the students to come out to the rest of this semester's events and to look at next semester's events. They can be found on the insert advertising page.

Student Union Board

Unity in the Community Rocks!

I feel that the Unity in the Community day went over very well. I'm glad that people chose to attend that instead of the klan rally. It shows how dedicated people are to changing the views of small minded, ignorant people.

Amber D Clarke

Alcohol is always an Issue!

No new alcohol policies!! Leave it as is and when seniors are 21, they should be *allowed* to have alcohol on campus in *their* own rooms.

David Gor

Good idea, No cash: Where does the money go?

Other than the fact that this year was pretty boring, I do know of one problem that I've had with getting things done around here.

Early in the year I heard stories from some of the seniors about how much fun their freshman year was. One of their stories was how they had *The Why Store* give a concert freshman year. Well, I went to two *Why Store* concerts this year, myself. I really enjoyed both of them. In my dorm, as far as I know, there's several people who enjoy *The Why Store's* music. And these same people say there's plenty of interest across campus in *The Why Store*.

It just so happened that I went to high school with a brother of *The Why Store's* agent. I didn't find this out until the beginning of the second semester. I told this to a couple people and they persuaded me to get the number of the agent and inquire about *The Why Store* performing here this spring. I did this and found out they would perform here for \$5000 on either April 9th, or the 23rd.

I told a person who's on the S.U.B. committee of this and he brought the information to a S.U.B. meeting. They turned it down, they said that they didn't have enough money for it. It just wasn't in their tight budget.

So, I brought the idea to two people who said they could get money from the radio station. The radio station said that they wouldn't have the money until next year, both times. They wouldn't have even been able to do it, this year, if they sold tickets to the event. I tried one more time. I took this idea to Stacey Lazenby, the new student activities director. I didn't really communicate with her in person, but I did leave a few serious voice mail messages. She must not have had any interest in the activity. That, or like everyone else, she doesn't know how to get the money to fund it. So, my question to this school's administration is where does all of our money go?

I pay too much to go to this school and, yet, we haven't had too many worthwhile student activities this year. Heck, the amount of money I pay to go to school is definitely not reflected in the food served in the cafeteria. There has to be some money hidden away somewhere. I just don't understand it.

James Traub

Squatter's Night is Lame!

What is up with "Squatter's Night?" What is the point in people receiving private status if all the singles are taken by people who claim 'Squatter's rights?' What is this, a field trip? You don't call Shotgun on a place where you want to live in 5 months in the real world. I am going to be a senior and I got jipped out of a single by students who are in lower grades than I.

Randy Wagers

Is it Golden Toilet Paper?

Dorm Fines. Since when does a roll of toilet paper cost \$3.64? My floor received this fine for "stolen toilet paper". How do they know it was stolen? The toilet paper here is definitely not Charmin. It's more like school paper with little pieces of shrapnel lined inside. This should cost less than a dollar. It may seem childish to complain about a small fine, but the overpricing of stuff around here is getting about as old as the ghost fines that have been made up for years. Gallagher 2nd got fined \$6.13 for a fire extinguisher going off, then again for \$13.75! Who figures these prices out, and how do they come up with them?!

Randy Wagers

Dorm Fines Suck

The dorm fines are ridiculous! Why does a dorm get charged for a trash can being knocked over? I thought the job of the janitors was to CLEAN! Our dorm got fined for "Urine smell in the bathroom," I am sorry, but what else should it smell like?

A few more examples: shaving cream on doors, leave that clean up to the person who lives in the room; \$500 dollars for the fire alarm at one time when there was actually a fire; a fine for the breaker box being open, it does not take money to close it; trash cleanup outside the building, why does it cost so much to clean it up? Why not fine the whole campus because half the time that trash is caused by students in other dorms.

I would also like to know why these fines are so high. If they were reasonable I could believe that they are used to pay for the clean up and other things but they are far from reasonable!

How is this money used? It cannot be figured into the budget since there is no way to know whether these fines will be incurred!

Ryan Myszak

Editor-in-Chief
Lisa Phillips

Managing Editor
Rhiannon Davis

Opinion Editor
Lisa Phillips

News Editor
Maura Giles

Little 500 Editor
Lisa Phillips

Features Editor
Melinda Burdan

Sports Editor
Bree Ma'Aytech

Stuff Editor
Rhiannon Davis

Advertising Editor
TJ Szerencse

Reporters
Christopher Gibson
Heather Hagan
Charles Martin
Sarah Martin
Zachary Pala
Sara Post
Jamie Riberto
Christine Scafide
Donald Shanahan
Will Shannon
Sarah Stipher

Digital Photographer
Charles Martin

Distribution Manager
Will Shannon

Faculty Facilitator
Dr. Charles Kerlin

Macintosh Advisor
Dr. Robert Schenk

Publisher
Dr. Albert Shannon

Letters to the Editor:
email: Observer
Opinion@Students@SJC
Letters to: Lisa Phillips or
Observer mailbox in Core
Building, or 3rd Floor Halleck
Length: 350-500 words (We
reserve the right to edit for
Length)
Submission Guidelines: Sign &
include telephone number.
Pseudonyms accepted but
discouraged.
*The Editorial Board reserves
the right not to print letters
found to violate applicable
policies

Senior of the Year: Jamie Portal

—by Sarah Stipher—

As graduation nears, so does the end of the school year. One of the most important awards is the Senior of the Year Award. This year, there were five deserving candidates: Mary Zurek, Jill Orzechoskie, Dan Ulvila, Jamie Portal, and Clay Webb. These five students were nominated via voting by their fellow seniors.

To be eligible for this award, the students had to complete a questionnaire and submit letters of recommendation from the Saint Joseph College faculty and staff. The students are also required to have a GPA of 3.25 or better. After the questionnaire was completed, the senior candidates were interviewed by five members of the

Alumni Board on February 15. The award for the Senior of the Year was given out at the President's



Jamie Portal is the 1999 Senior of the Year. Photo by Charles Martin

Senior Dinner in the Halleck Ballroom April 9.

And the winner is....Jamie Portal. Portal is a Math/Secondary Education major. Her plans after graduation are to teach high school math in her hometown of Chicago. She has been very busy this year. Her other activities include: Tri-Director Student Union Board, Resident Assistant, Habitat for Humanity, Campus Ministry, Tutoring Coordinator, Freshman Leader, Peer Ministry, and Kairos.

The Senior of the Year Award was established in 1967. Since then, one student is selected to receive this prestigious award. The winner received a plaque and \$100 from the Alumni Board.

Congratulations to Jamie.

Binge Drinking on Campus

—by Patrick Guyette—

It was a normal Friday night of getting together with friends, making plans, socializing and binge drinking at Ferris State University when the unexpected happened. The white snow on the ground gave no hint of what would soon happen to sophomore Adriane Allen, 20 of Williamston, MI. Soon the innocent girl would stumble to her room after a few too many drinks to lay down and rest, when she leaned up against her bedroom window and fell two stories crashing to her death. The autopsy results showed said that she died from massive head and internal injuries.

At Saint Joseph's College, one RA reports seeing a hallway packed with students drinking, falling all over each other and stumbling their way down the stairs. "It's a miracle that these people do not get hurt," says Nick Wagner. College binge drinking is not only a problem for Ferris State University and Saint Joseph's College, but is a nationwide epidemic among all college students. According to a 1995 College Alcohol study by the Harvard School of Public Health, 52% of college students drink to get drunk. This is up from 33% in 1993 and is still increasing in 1999. The average teen in college drinks on more than five days a

month, according to a study by the American Academy of pediatrics. Furthermore, the amount of alcohol consumed in these five days is "awesome."

"Some believe that college binge drinking is not merely a campus problem, but a societal problem because the peer group does not think alcohol use is wrong," says Vice President for Student Affairs, Bill Manis, of Saint Joseph's College.

"College students will put up with the abuse of alcohol only for its use. The students might not like it, but they accept it. I've held this position for 31 years and am afraid to say that I've seen it all, because whenever I say that something new always pops up. I feel that a big reason why alcohol is being abused by many college students is because of a misconception that there is a god in alcohol. For some, they believe that drinking alcohol is like serving a rite of passage from childhood into adulthood. The job of people in my position should be to take the god out of alcohol. Like many other college officials, I am open to any ideas on how to curb the abuse of alcohol that is so rampant in America's college students."

"One way that police officers of the San Marcos, TX, Alcoholic Beverage Commission have combated underage drinking is to uncover liquor-law violators at fraternity par-

ties and local bars and pubs," says Officer Steve Griffith. "We have to get the message across that there will be consequences."

At Ferris State University, student Dave Robertson, 20 Charlotte, a junior criminal justice major, approves of showing students the ugly consequences of binge drinking. He heard an officer describe the scene when Ferris State student Adriane Allen fell out of her apartment window after a night of heavy drinking. "They need to show consequences. If they show pictures, it strikes home and students will think twice."

At Michigan State, alcohol free night clubs with laser light shows and virtual reality games are being offered on campus, especially on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights. Also, a bussing schedule has been arranged so that students only have to pay \$1 in fares to go to the city bars from the residence halls and back again for another \$1.

But what is happening at Saint Joe to defer students from drinking? There are extracurricular activities like SUB (Student Union Board) and MSU (Minority Student Union) events, sports teams, academic clubs, IM Bowling and occasional field trips, however, Saint Joe's is far from the laser light shows and dance clubs that larger colleges and universities can offer.

Little 500 Schedule

Mr. Puma-Thursday, 8pm in the Ballroom
Crowning of Little 500 Queen-Thursday, 8pm Ballroom
Little 500 Student and Alumni paractice-Friday, 3-5pm
Alumni race-Saturday, 10:45-11:45am
Student race-Saturday, 1-3:45pm
Lazar tag-Saturday, 11am-4pm and 6-7pm on the IM field
Student/Community Booths-Saturday, 11am-4pm
Band: Angel's Ride-Saturday 4-6pm on the IM feild

**In case of rain, the race will be run on Sunday, April 25.



"One reason for heavy drinking at Saint Joe's is its location," says Andrea Reusser, Director of Campus Life at Saint Joe. "Rensselaer is a small town that has limited attractions for its students. Many have to drive to Merrillville, Remington, Lafayette, Indianapolis, or Chicago to find entertainment. In traveling, money is required and a college student with money is rare. Although this reasoning does not justify itself for the quantity of alcohol consumed, it certainly does lend itself to drinking more."

Binge drinking is not the only major problem associated with alcohol. According to the 1997 College Alcohol survey (Anderson and Gadaletto) college and university administrators estimate alcohol is involved with: 29% of drop outs, 38% of academic failures, 64% of violent behaviors, 66% of unsafe sexual practices and 75% of acquaintance rapes.

"The worst thing for a person in my profession to see is a young student ruin the rest of their life because of a mistake made on one night," says Bill Manis and Andrea Reusser.

Another angle to this binge drinking problem is the Greek system. In the past few years, fraternities and some sororities have taken some major hits across the (continued on page 9)

Tying it all together

What do all the Religion articles mean?

by Chris Gibson

So it's been a semester already, eh? When I was asked to join the paper, and suggested starting a religion column, if someone asked me exactly what I wanted to do, I couldn't have told him. I

hardly knew anyone on campus, and for the first issue and every issue of *The Observer* afterward, set out to ask strangers, acquaintances and newly found friends any sort of questions on religion that came to mind. "How do you feel about religion?" "Are you Catholic? If not, how does it feel to attend a Catholic college?" "Are

there any problems you have with the Church or issues that you'd like to discuss?" Or, "Why did you stop believing in God? Why did you leave the Church? In a time when so many people are leaving the Church, why did you stay?"

Inevitably, asking people about one of the most personal areas of their lives I got a lot of, "This is off the record," information, and "I can't believe I'm saying this," as well as, "You're sure this is going to be in the paper?" The biggest hesitation I got, from people who didn't flat out refuse to be interviewed, was "I'm not a religious person." My response generally was, "Everyone is a religious person."

In the one semester I have worked on the column, I have been surprised by how true that is. I have found God in the strangest places. He is the not the soul province of the Church, or even of the saintly member of the church. Everyone has something to say about him and the people who claim to worship him.

One student said, "I don't believe in the Church, or that Jesus was the Son of God, but I do believe in being good to people. That's Christianity, isn't it?"

The comments I learned the most from were those that came after I put the pen down, when

people would just begin to talk to me. One young woman said, "I don't go to church often, but I find myself praying. I go to God, and it's like he just says 'Be calm,'"

There were days when I came back from

It is out medicrity
as much as our hypoc-
risy that is turning our
brothers and sisters
from the church doors.

the interviews fairly disillusioned, when I tried to hunt up practicing Catholics for an interview and wound up with people who told me they had left the church because it was full of hypocrites, then I interviewed people whose only testimony was, "I admit I am a hypocrite. I contradict myself everyday," as if such an

admission were a good thing. Or the student from Halas Hall I interviewed, who said, "Do you ever get to church and just become so frustrated because it seems like no one cares, like it's just full of people who aren't paying attention and don't really mean what they're doing?"

Many people who were interviewed were afraid that no one felt the way they felt, that they were the only people who had lost faith or never had it. I got a lot of, "Do you have to put my name to this, because people might get angry at what I say." But I wanted to know what was really on the minds of students here, religiously. And I thought it was important for other students to know more about each other.

As a reporter I've come away excited at the variety of fiery opinions. As a Catholic I have an opinion of my own, a deep conviction actually. I cannot speak for atheists, other peoples of differing religions or even other Christian churches. But I do speak for my fellow Catholics. We, who are the next generation of the Church entering Her twenty-first century, must be a generation of saints. It is our mediocrity as much as our hypocrisy that is turning our brothers and sisters from the church doors.

Re-discovering Myself

by Melinda Burdan

When Heather, the Feature editor first semester, approached me with the idea that I would be the new editor while she was doing her internship, I was hesitant to accept the position. I thought that there was surely someone who was more qualified and could do a better job than me. I hadn't even been involved in the paper that long.

Being an editor has taught me several things about myself. After the first part of this semester, I discovered that even though there were deadlines and several headaches, I really loved laying out

pages. Now it is one of my goals to work in design and layout.

My parents always told me that I shouldn't be afraid of anything because "if it didn't kill me, it would make me stronger." The newspaper has indeed made me stronger. I found out there was something inside me that I didn't even know existed.

I don't have any brilliant words of wisdom for the readers of *The Observer*, but I do have one piece of advice - don't be afraid to try new things. You, too, might discover part of yourself.

Plagiarism:
Everyone's doing
it...Are you?

by Zac Pala

Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. This is the definition of one of the many types of academic dishonesty that occurs among students: plagiarism.

According to the University of Illinois at Chicago's (UIC) Office of Student Judicial Affairs, 68.1% of undergraduate college students admitted that they had been involved in some form of plagiarism at least once during their college career. The types of plagiarism reported included submitting another persons work, taking credit for someone else's ideas, copying information straight from the internet, and giving or using a paper passed from a student to plagiarize from.

In addition, research conducted by UIC showed that group projects increase the chances of students committing an act of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism. These findings suggest that an estimated 130 academic dishonesty incidents occur per year among a student body of 25,000. However, when these statistics are compared to actual rates of confirmed cases of academic dishonesty, it is obvious that a great deal of cases are overlooked or undetected. When you combine all of these factors, UIC officials believe that the rate of academic dishonesty is likely to escalate.

According to the 1999 Puma Guide, "Students at the College are obligated to understand the central role of honesty in its relation to academic course work." This statement is obviously intended to discourage students from committing academic dishonesty, and it is followed by penalties for those who are found in violation of academic dishonesty regulations.

The minimal penalty for a first time offender is an "F" on the project or exam, however the standard penalty is an F in the course. A two-time offender will at least receive an F in the course, however the standard punishment would result in the expelling of the student from the college.

For the most part, these SJC penalties are very similar to the consequences of other major institutes of higher learning, concerning academic dishonesty policies.

As severe and damaging as these penalties can be to a student, research shows that on a national level college students as a whole continue to violate codes of academic honesty. Sincere statements such as, "Students are expected to be truthful in all academic relationships on campus; in all courses, each student has the responsibility to submit work that is uniquely the student's own," simply go unregarded.

The Last Little 500 of the Millennium



LAST YEAR'S LITTLE 500: Winner Brad Gellert, driving Kart number 3, dominated the race from the very beginning. Here Gellert is shown taking his well earned victory lap with flag held high. Photo by Tom Szerencse



LAST YEAR'S LITTLE 500: TJ Szerencse, chair of the Little 500, stands in the foreground, waiting for all the Karts to line up at the starting line before starting the alumni race. Photo by Tom Szerencse

Prizes: First Place: \$500
Second Place: \$250
Third Place: \$150
Fourth Prize: \$100
Fifth Prize: \$75
Sixth Prize: \$50

Length: 2 hours 45 minutes

Number of Drivers: 11



Chairperson: TJ Szerencse

Assistant Chair: Jen Price

Driver Liason: Jill Masters

Chair in Training: Bob Spychalski

Technical Advisors: John Plank

Jon Messman

Head Track Marshal: Zane Donaldson

Advertising/Sponsorship: Amy Block

The Little 500 Go-Kart race began in 1963, when Student Council Vice-President, Mitch Kaminski suggested a weekend of relaxation and procrastination before the onset

of finals and graduation. It has since evolved from ten students pushing a wooden Kart to the aerodynamic speedster of today. There is both a student and an alumni race. The track

is half a mile long, circling the Grotto. Preparation takes the entire week, including leveling, fencing and practice sessions. The event is still closely tied with the Student Senate and the Stu-

dent Union Board. In addition to the race, there are several other events scheduled for the week, including Mr. Puma, the band *Angel's Ride*, and lazer tag.

Meet the Drivers

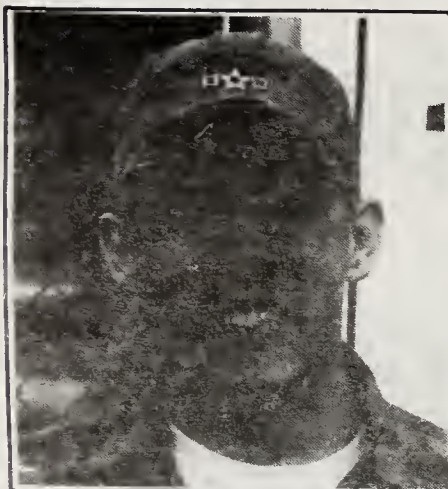


Photo by Charles Martin

Name: Craig R. Phipps
Kart Number: 99
Team Name: Webbed Rosey Feet Racing
Sponsors: Service Master, Louie "Loufa" Garret, On Cue, Anders', Arni's, Reinforcements Design, Stage, Indianapolis Electric, Wilhelm, etc..
Class: Junior
Major: Music Education
Hometown: Bainbridge, Indiana
Years of Little 500 experience (including this year): two
Previous finishes: 5th

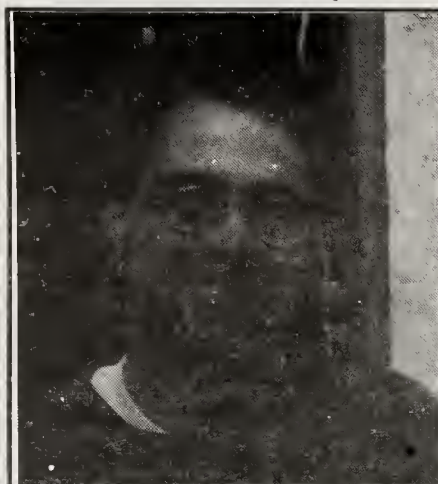


Photo by Charles Martin

Name: Shawn Roser
Kart Number: 41
Team Name: Webbed Rosey Feet Racing
Sponsors: Men of Merlini, Junior class, Judge Monfort, PLZ Management, WPUM, The Gazebo, John Plank, Print Promotions, etc..
Class: Junior
Major: Computer Science
Hometown: Brownsville, Texas
Years of Little 500 experience (including this year): two
Previous finishes: 6th

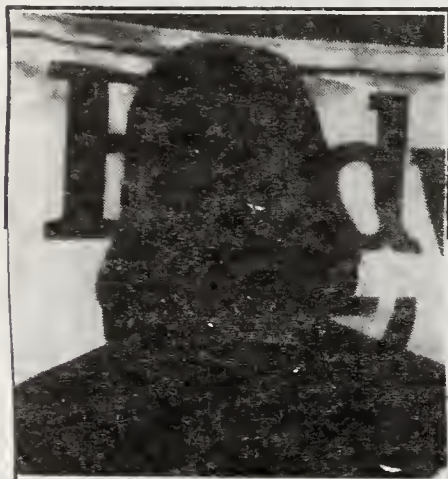


Photo by Charles Martin

Name: Carrie Edgell
Kart Number: 24
Team Name: Stund Dawg Racing
Sponsors: Jack's Uptown Service, Hoover House Furniture, The Shannon family, Rensselaer Lumber, Kem's Trustworthy Hardware, Phil Wilhelm Reality, Mike Deyoung
Class: Senior
Major: Biology
Hometown: Indianapolis, Indiana
Years of Little 500 experience (including this year): three
Previous finishes: 6th, 3rd

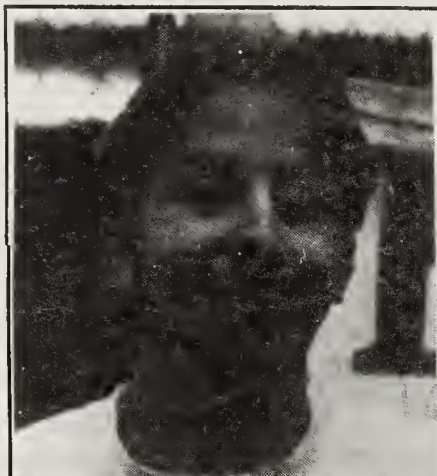


Photo by Charles Martin

Name: Charles Martin
Kart Number: 6
Team Name: American Quality
Sponsors: Hamilton Service Center, Gene's Sunoco, American Quality Machining, Kabelin's True Value, Martin's Greenhouse
Class: Sophomore
Major: Environmental Science
Hometown: Walkerton, Indiana
Years of Little 500 experience (including this year): two
Previous finishes: 2nd

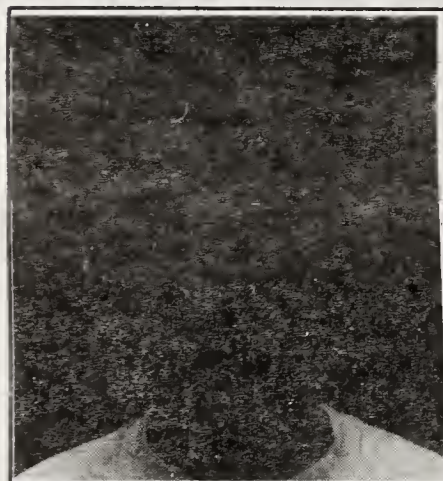


Photo by Charles Martin

Name: Jill Masters
Kart Number: 50
Team Name: Masters of the Universe
Sponsors: Financial Aid, Admissions Office, Brian Corrigan
Class: Junior
Major: Mass Communications
Hometown: Rockford, Illinois
Years of Little 500 experience (including this year): one

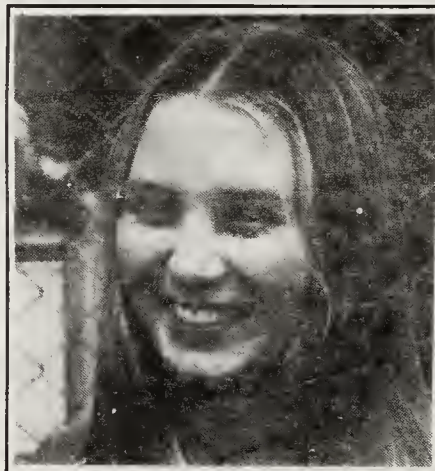


Photo by Charles Martin

Name: Sara Nothnagle
Kart Number: 7
Sponsors: Information Not Available
Team Name: Friendly Ghost Racing
Class: Freshman
Major: Information Not Available
Hometown: Oak Lawn, Illinois
Years of Little 500 experience (including this year): one
Below: LAST YEAR'S LITTLE 500: In the Alumni Race Kart 27, Jason Ostrowski class of 1994, and Kart 18, Stephan Koos class of 1995, stayed close the whole race. Photo by Tom Szerencse

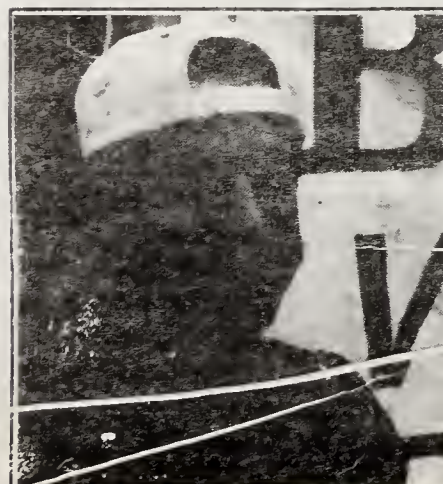
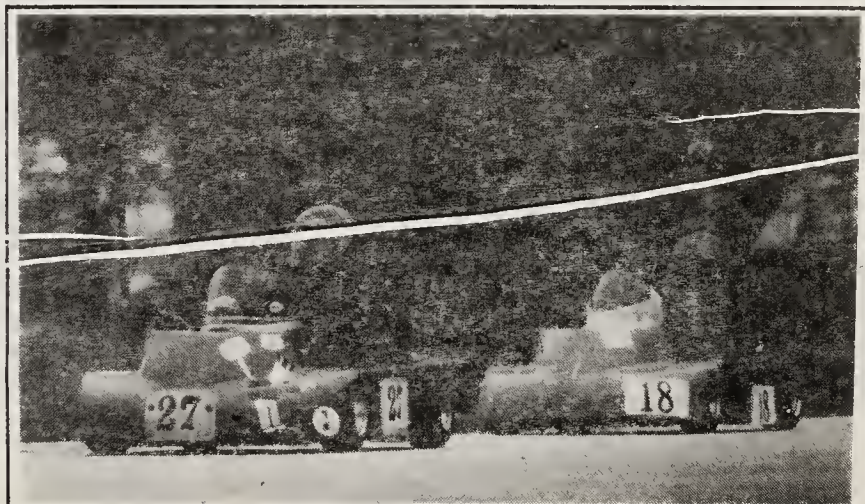


Photo by Charles Martin

Name: Bill Knox
Kart Number: 13
Team Name: Friendly Ghost Racing
Sponsors: United Acceptance Corporation, SESCO, Smith's True Value, Heuring Ford, "Uncle" Mike Vallone, Del Principe & Allie C.P.A.'s, Kristen 'n' Trish, M.O.M.
Class: Sophomore
Major: Political Science
Years of Little 500 experience (including this year): two
Previous finishes: none



of The Little 500

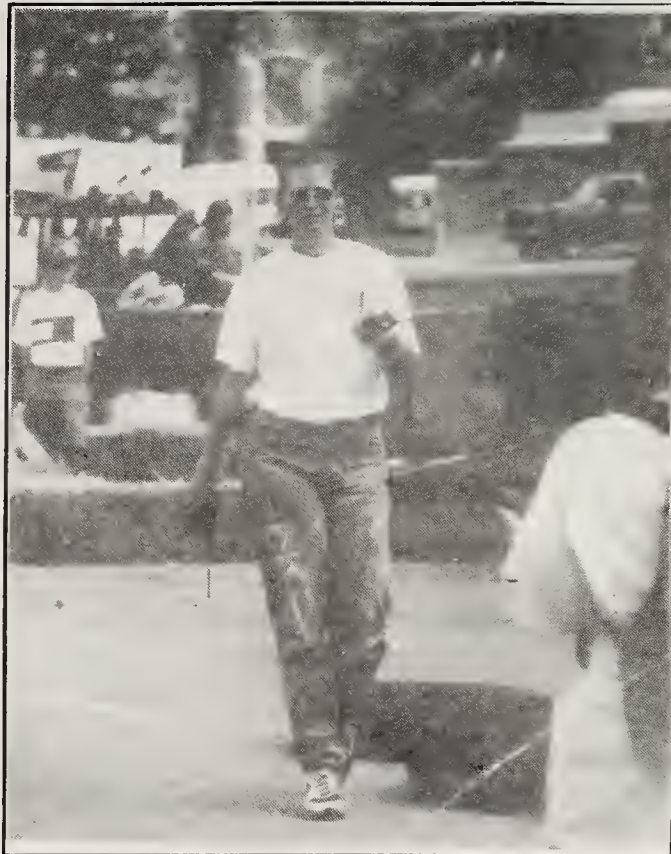
Not Pictured

Name: Tony Williams
Cart Number: 18
Team Name: Info Unavailable
Sponsors: Info Unavailable
Class: Senior
Major: Management
Hometown: Indianapolis, Indiana
Years of Little 500 experience (including this year): one

Name: Jennie Keneau
Kart Number: 98
Team Name: Little Jennie's Homewreckers
Sponsors: Harold & Mary Ann Keneau, Amanda Keneau, Ed McEvoy, Maggie Wise, Woolly Acres Llama Farm, Mike McEvoy
Class: Freshman
Major: Elementary Education
Hometown: Clinton, Michigan
Years of Little 500 experience (including this year): one

Name: Blair VanVelse
Kart Number: 21
Team Name: Friendly Ghost Racing
Sponsors: Cooper's Tires & Services, Schools Are Us, L&P Body Shop, Sodexo Marriott, City Office & Pub, ect...
Class: Senior
Major: International Business
Hometown: Indianapolis, Indiana
Years of Little 500 experience (including this year): two
Previous finishes: 10th

Name: Rhianon Davis
Kart Number: 4
Team Name: The Thunderbrats
Sponsors: EK Enterprises, Davis Petroleum, James Chapko, The Observer, Roger Burns
Class: Freshman
Major: Music
Hometown: Hobart, Indiana
Years of Little 500 experience (including this year): one



LAST YEAR'S LITTLE 500: Jill Masters, who will be racing this year, played an important role in last year's Little 500, as Head Track Marshall, coordinating all four corners of the race. Photo by Tom Szerencse

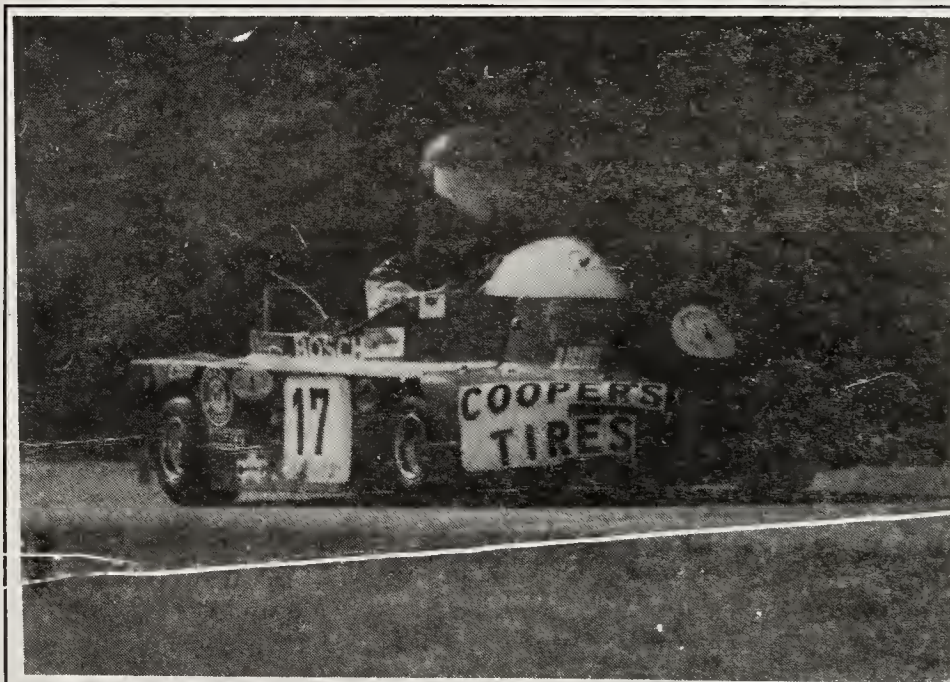


Carrie Edgel, Kart 24, checking out her car at engine draw on Monday April 19th. Photo by Charles Martin

I think it's [Little 500]

the most gratifying thing I've done. That and slinging tires. Getting dirty is fun!

-TJ Szerencse, Chairperson



LAST YEAR'S LITTLE 500: Kart 17, Bill Knox, going into turn one during the practice session. Photo by Tom Szerencse

"My favorite story from last year was when they came over the headset 'Corner 3 is waving yellow, there's a squirrel on the track!'"

-Jen Price, Assistant Chair

What Happens Before the Beer and Brat Tent:

by Lisa Phillips

The checkered flag has dropped. The crowds are gone. The course shows no signs of the speeding go carts that zoomed around the track only hours ago. The clean up crew is hoisting bales of hay and gossiping about the flipped car on turn four. As the organizers stand near the pit watching the track being torn down, they are already preparing for next year.

"We critically analyze the race we just had, to see what we did well and what we could do better next year," explained Toni Szerencse, known as TJ, who has been the Little 500 Chair for three years. "We try to find ways to keep this a fun and safe race."

When school starts up again, the "first three or four months are mostly recruiting." That's how TJ got involved. "I was a gullible freshman when I walked into student activities call out. I just wanted to be a Track Marshall" She did become a Track Marshall. Her sophomore year, however, she found herself in charge of the entire event.

Getting Ready for

Little 500

The Little 500 Committee recruits heavily, especially at student activities call out, with racing footage, candy, posters, and best of all, people who helped in previous years, sporting stories of squirrels on the track and roaring engines.

It takes about 70 students, all giving various amounts of their time and talent, plus between \$7,000 and \$10,000, money that comes from SJC, to keep the 36 year Little 500 tradition alive. By January the committee turns its attention to the technical aspects of the race. Rules are changed and added to as needed. Last year TJ had to extensively restate and re-em-

phasize the alcohol policy. "No participant is allowed to drink from 12:01 a.m. on Friday morning until the end of the race on Saturday," explained TJ. Bill Manis, Vice President of Student Affairs, gave the chair the final say concerning whether any given person can participate. Meaning she can stop anyone from racing if she has reason to believe they have violated the alcohol policy. "I haven't had to enforce it yet. But I do have the power."

This year there weren't many drastic changes, "We added to the entry fee. This year's fee is \$100, instead of \$75. The extra \$25 is refundable if the driver works on track set-up for two or more hours in the week." And the fine tuning is always in progress. "On a technical ruling about the use of spark plugs...you must use the spark plug that is supplied with the engine. While this was always assumed, we made it explicit this year."

The last month before the race is filled with paperwork. Work orders have to be filled out. Everyone involved in the race must sign an insurance waiver, as well

as be informed and tested on the rules. Programs and t-shirts must be designed. Banquet menus and safety meetings eat away at the committee's time. An ambulance must be hired, "just in case." The committee helps SUB, the Student Union Board, plan activities for the weekend and pay for the band and novelties. Other clubs join in to sponsor events or booths.

The track set up begins on the Monday before the race, with all of the students, faculty and alumni involved lending a hand to situate hay bales and prepare the track. Safety for all concerned is the emphasis. Rules are gone over, pit crews assembled and final preparations made. The worst part about Little 500 is "the people who just don't understand the danger involved - people who think it's funny to spit off the bridge when the carts are going under it or cross the track during the race," TJ rolled her eyes.

"I really enjoy race day, though. When you can hear the cars coming around turn three. To know how much work goes into it and to see it all come to fruition - I think that's the most gratifying thing I've ever done," nodded TJ solemnly, then grinning she added, "That and slinging tires. Getting dirty is fun."

LAST YEAR'S LITTLE 500: The Webbed Rosey Feet Racing team poses in the pit. From Left to right: Jen Townsend, Stephen Giles, David Delauro, Shawn Roser (who will be racing again this year), Matt Jenks, Katie Robinson, Andy Hicks and Sara Kloseck. Photo by Tom Szerencse



LAST YEAR'S LITTLE 500: The three top finishers; Brad Gellert with first place, Charles Martin with second place, and Carrie Edgell with third place posed for a picture beside the winning kart, number 3. Photo by Tom Szerencse



USING THEIR RELIGION

by Chris Gibson

While many of us spent our spring breaks lazing on beaches, or at home, wishing we had something to do, a group of twenty-two students went to Lynchburg, Virginia to help build houses with Habitat for Humanity. Since tarring foundations, insulating attics and constructing eaves (FOR FREE!!!) do not usually fall under fun methods of spending a spring vacation, I interviewed three of the students who went to Virginia to ask if their faith had anything to do with their going.

"Definitely," says Megan Taylor, "I think the most important part of being a Christian, especially a Catholic, is service."

Taylor was not born into a Catholic household. "My grandmother was the one who got me started," says Megan. Before her father became a Catholic, there was trouble between the two of them. "Then one day my father came into my room and said, 'I'm going to church with you.' Now he is like my best friend."

Every night she reads a letter from him about Christian service and his pride in his daughter, which Megan showed me.

Megan Taylor is used to hard work though, "I love working, I love moving around. I thrive on being busy," she says. "I like to help people out." Megan maintains four jobs at present, only one which is outside of this campus.

When I came to interview her she was just coming from her first day job at Arby's. "I don't usually get to my room until ten o'clock, and I do homework until about one. The only time being busy bothers me is when things start to converge," says Taylor, because then she is no longer able to give everything her best effort.

Megan says she found out about Habitat back home, in Cleveland, Ohio. She joined the

group there where one of their chief projects was working on a predominantly African American neighborhood in the center of a wealthy community that had gone to the dogs. "When I came here (to Saint Joe's)," she says, "I just continued what I started with Habitat back home."

There are many other ways to help people, but about Habitat Megan says, "You get to meet the people you're helping to provide a home for. It's not a give away, they have to work for those homes and you get to work with them."

Ana Ostman confesses that it is not necessarily religion that landed her in Lynchburg, Virginia.

"It's more a matter of personal view. It's always been a dream of mine to help people that are less fortunate than I."

"I am not very religious. I'm in this stage of my life when I'm trying to find my own, including my own religion. Everyone has to find what works for them, and I haven't found it yet."

"My parents were very forceful Catholics," says Ostman. "We were always told that we'd have to go to church every Sunday until we moved out. I resented my parents for trying to force me into their own religion when I believe we all need to find our own."

In addition to Habitat, Ana works with Bread for the World, a division of campus ministry devoted to fighting world hunger, "It is not that I am religious," says Ostman, "but that I love helping people and this is a way to do it. I always admired Mother Teresa, that she could go out and give her whole life in what she did."

"People who say they're Catholics should get up off their butts and stop worrying about being tan and start helping people," says senior, Kathy

Jarowicz.

When asked about her religion, Jarowicz said, "I am a non-practicing Catholic. I mean here I am, I don't believe in anything. I'm the one who should be running to Florida, drinking and laying out in the sun all day and sinning. I don't go to church, I don't believe in it anymore. What I've observed around me, in the churches I've been in, is that Catholics are hypocrites."

When asked what parts of her the Catholicism remain in her, Jarowicz says emphatically, "I don't believe in the Bible, I don't believe in the church. I don't believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. But I do know that we are supposed to help people. I didn't go to Virginia so much from sense of religious duty as a moral obligation."

Kathy Jarowicz has spent everyone of her spring breaks going on Habitat trips to build houses. "I like building stuff," she says simply, "and I like to help people. I want to know that on my spring break I accomplished something - meeting new people, going new places. But I wouldn't accomplish anything in Florida. I don't want to be laying on my ass accomplishing nothing."

Megan Taylor too, is grieved by the hypocrisy of the Church, and it is one of her chief concerns that she not be part of it. "It seems so many people have lost their focus. I lose mine on occasion, I know. But I always get it back."

When asked why she has not left it, but is still very much a part of her religion, she says, "When I hear people talk about leaving the church it saddens me, because I think of how many people I may have turned away. I think it comes down to allowing people to be able to make mistakes."

(cont. from page 3) country for the deaths of many college students. However, the Greek system does not foster responsibility and accountability.

Individual fraternity and sorority chapters have to do service work and behave according to their pledge. If these basic criteria are not met, then that chapter will lose its charter. At Saint Joe's, the residence halls are set up much like the Greek system; most of the soccer guys live in Merlini Hall, the football guys live Seifert, baseball players live in Noll, and most of the basketball guys live in Gallagher. The same applies to women's sports.

The only difference between Saint Joe's set up and the Greek systems is that if there is a disciplinary problem within a fraternity, the fraternity can lose its recognition by its national chapter. At Saint Joe, the students involved are punished according to the school's policy. There is no sense of losing identity. "There is no method outside of school policy that can make people accountable for their actions," says Reusser.

Lastly, there is a national or cultural attitude that accepts drinking and expects college students to drink. "In order to stop binge drinking, students need to be educated about the effects of alcohol," added Reusser.

"At Saint Joe's we offer a one credit hour Alcohol Lab course that we require all RA's to enroll in. The course is also used as an elective for certain majors like sociology and psychology. The Campus Life office uses the alcohol lab as a disciplinary measure for those students who have had a

problem with alcohol or who have been caught with alcoholic beverages on campus three times or more.

We use this class as a multipurpose platform for students to express themselves on a subject that gets attention behind closed doors. It is an opportunity for students to learn what alcohol does to their bodies, and allows first hand accounts about tragedies linked with alcohol.

Who can be held accountable for the actions of a person that lead to another person's death? Some people want to follow the laws of third party responsibility. Advocates of this law want to place the blame of the incident of death during or after the party on the bartender or the host of the party. Others want to hold the college accountable for the wrongful death of their son or daughter on the pretense that the college or university does not do enough to protect, enforce or educate the students on the abuse of alcohol.

When a student dies because of an alcohol related event, no law suit, judge or jury can bring the young adult back to life. No amount of money is enough to compensate for the loss of a loved one. That is why education on alcohol is needed throughout the country and at SJC to prevent any serious injuries from occurring. Saint Joe's has a blanket policy that no students can possess alcoholic beverages while on campus regardless of age. This rule is in effect so that there is no confusion about the policy.

NCAA PUTS SJC ON TWO YEAR PROBATION

—by Bree Ma'Ayteh—

The NCAA sent out a press release last Thursday officially stating that Saint Joseph's College is on two years probation because of violations against the NCAA rules by the men's basketball team.

The first offense occurred in August 1997, when former Coach Bill Bland paid \$1,600 on a student-athlete's bill in order that the student might enroll for the next year and be eligible to

play basketball. The coach lied about it when first questioned about it, saying that he paid the bill with money that the student earned while working at Bland's basketball camps during the summer. Bland also gave approximately \$130 dollars in cash to cover expenses and transportation for a student-athlete and his girlfriend, which violated the NCAA's rules regarding "impermissible extra benefits" (NCAA Press Release).

In addition to this, at least

three student-athletes participated in more than the maximum number of contests allowed in a season for Division II basketball during the 1996-1997 school year. Bland failed to inform a student that his basketball scholarship must be renewed annually, allowing the student to believe that the scholarship was automatic. He also gave some of the students playing instruction outside of basketball season. All of these events led up to Bland's resignation in June 1998, and Dave Balza took his place as basket-

ball coach.

Bland's offenses forced the NCAA to put SJC on a two-year probation. I spoke with Marty Smith, athletic director, to discuss those terms.

"[The NCAA] will monitor us closely," he stated, "and [SJC] will have to have monthly compliance meetings."

Smith also explained that the original number of 10 scholarships allowed for SJC men's basketball will be reduced to 8 for the 1999-

2000 school year, after which the number will go back to ten. The basketball team is also ineligible to play in the post-season tournament which, if the team had been undefeated in, they would have been able to participate in regional playoffs.

Despite the penalties, Smith remains positive.

"The NCAA was pleased with the College handled the situation," he said. "We have participated in everything they have asked us to."

"WHY DO I RUN TRACK AT SAINT JOSEPH'S COLLEGE?" One Student's Perspective

—by Chrissy Scafide—

The rumble of thunder rattles through my bones as a spark of lightning flickers off in the distance. Mud and water splash with every step I take, covering my backside with filth as I continue my run. My ankles and shins ache because of the unlevel ground of the cinder track, but I continue to push on. My teammates (also dedicated runners on the Puma track team) and I obey like soldiers to the voice of Bill Massoels, our coach, which is heard echoing through the woods of windbreakers. We concentrate intensively on his directions heard practically a mile away:

"Knee lift! Extension! Arms! Cycle through! Close the gap! Finish!"

Yes, you heard right, I am speaking of the glorious cinder track that lies in front of the fieldhouse here at good ole Saint Joe. She's a beauty,

isn't she? Well, ask any half-way decent track and field participant around, and I will guarantee you they'll tell you otherwise. So, if we don't have a real track-and I mean some form of rubber surface with at least six functional lanes-then, why do I run track at Saint Joseph's College?

Believe it or not, I get asked that question all the time. It is a perfectly logical question. We are an NCAA Division II college, nationally ranked. People think I'm crazy when they ask about our track and I respond, "What track?" I guess no one would believe me if I told them that the reason I run track at SJC is because we are the only school in the GLVC that can grow a full garden in the second lane.

Well, there are many rea-

sons why I decided to come to Saint Joe and run track. When I was senior in high school, I heard both of the men's and the

"People think I'm crazy when they ask about our track and I respond, 'What track?'"

considering....well....you know. I thought to myself, "This Massoels guy must really know what he's doing if he could accomplish something like this."

So I signed with the College and as soon as I got here my freshman year, everything started to fall into place. I began to realize more and more why I enjoyed running here.

I could not believe how much fun the team was having. Unlike a Division I school, practice

doesn't seem so much like work. Granted, we all strive to work our butts off and always give 100%, but when you spend half of the time laughing and wrestling with Bill, or playing jokes on your teammates, all the hard work doesn't seem so bad.

Even though we can joke around with Bill, we also know there's a time to be serious. If we ever have a problem with anything, such as school, home, friends, etc., we know we can always count on Bill. There's been many times where I've found myself in Bill's office (most of the time crying), listening to his fatherly advice.

With all the joking aside, Bill is like our "boss." In his speeches after every Wednesday practice (and he'll say it EVERY week), he stresses the point that we are "blue collar workers" who don't just get handed

national ranking. Just as Bill says:

"We put our hard hats on and carry our lunch pails as a team. We work hard for our success and we do it as a team."

So when people ask me why I run track at SJC, I can tell them it's because of Bill Massoels. I can also tell them it's because we are the only team at meets to cheer the loudest for each other, and give each other the most support. I can lastly tell them I'd sacrifice the luxury of a real track for the atmosphere at SJC. But I prefer to tell them this:

"I run for Saint Joseph's College because I'm Little Jack, I'm a Puma, and I carry my lunch pail wearing a hard hat."

SJC women's golf team finished in 7th place out of 8 teams at the Lady Greyhound Spring Class in Indianapolis. Amanda McKirgan led the Pumas with a 26th place score of 93. Beth Jerzyk shot a 97, Chrissy Staffan shot a 100, Lindsay Serbin-Baltz, and Katie Tiedeman both shot a 101. SJC as a team shot a 391.

Last week at the Ball State Invitational, Kevin Knaust shot a 83 while Clay Scagnoli shot a 92 and Billy Paulson shot a 111.

GAMES AHEAD

Monday, April 19
Softball: Home vs. IPFW (DH) at 3 PM

Wednesday, April 21

Softball: at Taylor University (DH) at 3 PM

Baseball: at Robert Morris (DH) at 5 PM

Friday, April 23
Track: at Purdue

Saturday, April 24

Softball: at Battle Creek, Michigan

Baseball: Home vs. Southern Indiana (DH) at 12 PM

Track: at Purdue

Sunday, April 25

Softball: at Battle Creek, Michigan

Baseball: Home vs. SIU Edwardsville

GO PUMAS!!



Yet Another Reason To Love The Football Team

—by Bree Ma'Ayteh—

Picking up tree limbs, raking up leaves, and bagging up trash. No, this is NOT a description of maintenance making their campus rounds. The site is Lourdes Grotto, and the people are none other than St. Joe's own football team. On April 19, the guys volunteered to spend about an hour and a half of their time cleaning up one of the most beautiful locations on campus. Also there to join in on the fun were Coach Tousignant, Coach Reva, and MJ Shannon.

I was able to grab a few minutes of Shannon's time on her way to deliver some extra garbage bags to a group of football players. She explained to me the process of how this event came about in the first place.

"Father Rueve is the longtime caretaker of the

grotto, and together he and I

have been in charge of 'dewilding' it," she said laughingly. "This year, Coach Reva asked if [the football team] could do something to help the campus...They are doing in one hour what it would take Father Rueve and I more than two weeks to do."

This same project was also done by the football team a few years of ago under the direction of (then) Coach Flaherty.

Shannon stressed that this was something that the football team volunteered to do, and that the time that they put into this project was greatly appreciated.

"I'm glad they're helping...they're willing to give back," she told me.

The grotto is one of the main

**"To see the football team cleaning the grotto is heaven."
-Cristin Marshall**



The football team is hard at work, with trash bags and rakes, cleaning up Lourdes Grotto. Maybe it will score them points for next season?!? Photo by Lisa Phillips

attractions on campus; it is a place of meditation and inspiration for not only the students, but for the people in the town of Rensselaer as well. With current process of re-

cruiting and the upcoming graduation approaching, Lourdes Grotto will be not only be a place to show off to incoming freshmen, but a source of nostalgia for those leaving the College.

Coach Joe Tousignant was able to say a few words about the event.

"It's a way to help the

campus," he said firmly. In regards to the team's attitude, he replied, "they have fun with each other."

Coach Reva was just as positive. "This is just another opportunity for [the team] to work together," he explained, a rake in his hand. "And they enjoy helping out."

As I walked through the grotto on my way to Halas Hall, I heard one of the guys shout to one of the other players, "By doin' this we get bonus points from God!"

That's one way of looking at it.

MJ Shannon wasn't the only one excited about the presence of the football in the grotto. As Cristin Marshall looked out the window of Halas Hall to stare at the boys hard at work, she sighed, "To see the football team cleaning the grotto is heaven."

THE LITTLE SHOT PUTTER THAT COULD

—by Jamie Riberto—

"I was on the track team in seventh grade and they told me to throw." Junior Becky Garza of Saint Joseph's College has been throwing shot and discus for nine years and hammer for the track team for three years. Her most recent accomplishment was this past weekend at the Little State Track Meet at Anderson University

where Garza improved her previous personal record in the hammer by two and a half feet, winning the hammer throw with a throw of 149'5". Her throw also broke the previous school record for the college. Garza also beat out her competition in the shot put, also winning the event for the Lady Pumas, which enabled her to capture the Most Valuable Field Event Athlete award at the meet Saturday.

"I improved in the shot this weekend but I am still not up to where I am supposed to be," Garza said. "...I like the hammer best. My goal is to make to Nationals. I am seven inches away from qualifying in hammer and I have four meets left."

Garza's best throws this year include a 119'5

in the discus, 39'5 in shot, and a 149'5 in hammer which she threw at the Little State meet Saturday.

Saturday, April 17th, the Pumas will compete in the Great Lakes Valley Conference meet at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Garza is a biology major with a minor in health therapy and is an athletic trainer for the Saint Joseph College football team during the fall season.

Summertime at the Movies

By Don Shanahan

****CUT THIS OUT AND KEEP IT****

4/30/99- Entrapment-- Sean Connery's gentleman thief teams up and falls for national agent Catherine Zeta-Jones (ZORRO) for a top-secret computer heist on the eve of the millennium.

5/7/99- The Mummy-- Special effects action meets old time monster movies for Egyptian treasure hunter Brendan Fraser & Co.

5/14/99- Arlington Road-- Shades of Oklahoma City as Jeff Bridges finds out friendly neighbor Tim Robbins is a terrorist.

5/19/99- Star Wars: Episode 1: The Phantom Menace-- Some special effects space movie prequel. I'm sure it's nothing big.

5/28/99- Notting Hill-- Hugh Grant's bookstore geek-falls for movie-star playing-movie-star Julia Roberts

6/4/99- Instinct-- Anthony Hopkins and Cuba Gooding Jr. dramatically come together as a wild gorilla scientist and the psychiatrist to help take the animal out of Hopkins

6/11/99- Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me-- Yeah, baby! Yeah!!!

6/11/99- The General's Daughter-- John Travolta stars in this military thriller of an investigation into the rape and murder of a base commander's daughter.

6/18/99- Tarzan-- The annual Disney animated feature brings the action packed legend of the jungle swinger to life.

6/25/99- Big Daddy-- Not Todd Wilkerson, but Adam Sandler plays a guy trying to impress a girl by adopting a kid and becoming a caring (ha!) father

7/2/99- Wild, Wild West-- "King of July 4th" Will Smith reteams with the people from MEN IN BLACK for an action comedy western with Kevin Kline, Salma Hayek, and Kenneth Branagh.

7/16/99- Eyes Wide Shut-- The first movie for Tom Cruise in over two years and the last of late director Stanley Kubrick has Cruise and wife Nicole Kidman as therapists engaging in a steamy circle of passion.

7/16/99- South Park: Bigger, Longer, and Uncut-- The title says it all.

7/23/99- The Haunting-- Big budget house ghost movie from the director of SPEED and TWISTER starring Liam Neeson and Catherine Zeta-Jones.

7/30/99- Runaway Bride-- The reteam between Richard Gere and Julia Roberts that everyone has been waiting for this time with a stood-up maid and an eager reporter.

8/6/99- Mystery Men-- Huge cast of Greg Kinnear, Ben Stiller, William H. Macy, Janeane Garofalo, and Hank Azaria playing odd-ball superheros battling supervillian Oscar winner Geoffrey Rush of all people.

8/13/99- Killing Mrs. Tingle-- The annual Kevin Williamson-written horror flick about a high school girl (Katie Holmes) who will stop at nothing to be valedictorian.

8/20/99- Blue Streak-- Crook Martin Lawrence tries to get money back by posing as a cop along with unwitting partners Luke Wilson and Dave Chappelle.

8/27/99- The Astronaut's Wife-- Johnny Depp stars in this psychological sci-fi drama about an astronaut that retires and comes home to his wife (Charlize Theron) a mysteriously changed man.

That's it; at least a movie a week from May to August. I know that's a great many movies to sit through, but if you miss them all I'll be back next year to tell you all about them. Keep in mind that some of these dates are very likely to change. Those Hollywood big-wigs never know what to do with some of these and some will get bumped around for months. Enjoy the summer and the overpriced popcorn!

IN MEMORY OF THE CHILD I LOST

by Rhiannon Davis

It happens to everybody, so where were you when it happened to you? I know exactly where I was. I was standing in church on a beautiful Sunday morning when I saw my friend and former classmate, Kristy, and her mother. I smiled at them for a moment before it occurred to me that it wasn't Kristy that I was looking at, but her "baby" sister, Kelly. As I frantically tried to remember when she'd grown so, I looked around at the other little kids from St. Bridget's Elementary School and made a horrific discovery. The children I remembered weren't little anymore. They weren't even children. They had become adolescents and teenagers. As I stood there alone—yet surrounded—in the church pondering this, I was forced to realize one of my worst fears had come true: somewhere, somehow, I had grown up.

Ironically, this was the moment I'd been waiting for all my life. It's the moment every little kid is waiting for. But when the moment finally came, I did not rejoice. I cried.

I cried for the innocence I realized I'd lost. Innocence I would never--could never--have again. When I was five I had dreamed about all the wonderful freedom I would have when I was seventeen. But on that fateful Sunday, I regretfully acknowledged that I had made a terrible mistake. I had had freedom then; more freedom than I would ever have again. What I hadn't understood was that it was a different kind of freedom—even better than driving a car or going out all by myself. What I had then was an unattached freedom. I may have had bedtimes and other restrictions, but they were trivial compared to the responsibilities I face today as I am entering that coveted adulthood.

I'm not implying that I'm unhappy with who I've become or the knowledge I've attained. On the contrary, I'm rather pleased. But I wish I could go back to my innocence, even for only one day. There was so much we overlooked and took for granted back then. Instead of making dinner, we played house. Instead of going to work, we played with little toy cars and dolls and pretended that we were grown-ups going to work. The world had an untarnished glamour to it. We didn't watch the news or worry about our cholesterol. We were safe and secure in a state of naive bliss. The good guys always won, and we were (or at least Mommy and Daddy were) invincible. We lived in paradise, an ignorant paradise. We didn't know it at the time, but as we get older it becomes painfully clear to us. One day we just look in the mirror and we are surprised by the person staring back at us. He or she is not the little child we remembered ourselves to be. It's a bittersweet moment. And it happens to everybody. Where were you when it happened to you?

"LETTER FROM MY CONSCIENCE"

By Chrissy Scafide

Dear Me,

I guess an apology is necessary. I've done it again. I must have forgotten how incredibly fragile you are. Your delicate soul can only take so much before it starts to crack. Once again, I've managed to shake you up and make you think twice. Why are you so afraid? One of these days you are going to shatter into a million pieces of "could haves" and "should haves" and it will be all my fault. At this rate, your cracks are creeping steadily and if I do not mend you soon it could be destructive. I know you think I'm terrible but I'm trying to fix that. I'm not the awful person you think I am. But I can't fix you over night! I wish you could just see. Life is like a roller coaster...so dangerous with so much risk involved that it gives you such a rush! Why are you so scared to ride? You will not break, and you will not shatter. I can only promise I will be more careful with you as long as you are willing to live. That's all I ask.

P.S.

You can blame me for the cracks, but you can't hold it against me for trying to live.

Sincerely,
Your Conscience

